

What is claimed is:

1. An information processing apparatus connected to an information processing device of a user and an information processing device of an information provider through a network, comprising:

a storage means for storing personal information of a plurality of users including said user; and

a providing means for providing said personal information stored in said storage means to said information processing device of said information provider on behalf of said information processing device of said user when access to said personal information comes from said information processing device of said user and a request for said personal information comes from said information processing device of said information provider.

2. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a decision means for determining the necessity for permission of said user for the provision of said personal information stored in said storage means; and

an inquiry means for inquiring, in response to a decision made by said decision means, said information processing device of said user whether said personal information can be provided and for getting a reply to the

inquiry;

wherein said providing means provides said personal information stored in said storage means to said information processing device of said information provider according to said reply obtained by said inquiry means.

3. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said inquiry means generates image data of a user interface through which said user enters permission of the provision of said personal information and transmits the generated image data to said information processing device of said user.

4. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

an authentication means for authenticating said user.

5. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a detection means for detecting a plurality of accesses made simultaneously from said user whose personal information is stored in said storage means.

6. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said detection means informs said user of said plurality of accesses made simultaneously from said user.

7. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said detection means records said plurality of accesses made simultaneously from said user into a log file.

8. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said detection means rejects any access made later than said plurality of accesses made simultaneously from said user.

9. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

another detection means for detecting an unauthorized access to said personal information stored in said storage means.

10. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said personal information stored in said storage means is in conformity with one of open profiling standard (OPS) and platform for privacy preference project (P3P).

11. An information processing method for use in an information processing apparatus connected to an information processing device of a user and an information processing device of an information provider, comprising the steps of:

storing personal information of a plurality of

users including said user; and

providing said personal information stored in said storage means to said information processing device of said information provider on behalf of said information processing device of said user when access to said personal information comes from said information processing device of said user and a request for said personal information comes from said information processing device of said information provider.

12. A transmitting medium for transmitting a computer program for use in an information processing apparatus connected to an information processing device of a user and an information processing device of an information provider, said computer program comprising the steps of:

storing personal information of a plurality of users including said user; and

providing said personal information stored in said storage means to said information processing device of said information provider on behalf of said information processing device of said user when access to said personal information comes from said information processing device of said user and a request for said personal information comes from said information processing device of said

information provider.

13. An information processing apparatus connected to an information processing device of an information provider through a server having a storage means for storing personal information of a plurality of users and a network, comprising:

an access means for accessing said information processing device of said information provider through said server; and

a control means for controlling the provision of said personal information stored in said storage means to said information processing device of said information provider by said server on behalf of any of said plurality of users when a request for said personal information comes from said information providing device of said information provider.

14. The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein said control means comprising:

a receiving means for receiving an inquiry by said server about the permission of providing said personal information stored in said storage means to said information processing device of said information provider; and

a reply means for making a reply to said inquiry

from said server received by said receiving means.

15. An information processing method for use in an information processing apparatus connected to an information processing device of an information provider through a server having a storage means for storing personal information of a plurality of users and a network, comprising the steps of:

accessing said information processing device of said information provider through said server; and

controlling the provision of said personal information stored in said storage means to said information processing device of said information provider by said server on behalf of any of said plurality of users when a request for said personal information comes from said information providing device of said information provider.

16. A transmitting medium for transmitting a computer program for use in an information processing apparatus connected to an information processing device of an information provider through a server having a storage means for storing personal information of a plurality of users and a network, said computer program comprising the steps of:

accessing said information processing device of

said information provider through said server; and
controlling the provision of said personal
information stored in said storage means to said
information processing device of said information provider
by said server on behalf of any of said plurality of users
when a request for said personal information comes from
said information providing device of said information
provider.